

STUDY GUIDE WEEK 4 - JOY FOR ETERNITY

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Since most of our LifeGroups do not meet officially in the weeks surrounding Christmas, we're giving you a short study guide and a series of additional blog resources in the coming weeks to help you in a number of situations you might find yourself in around Christmas.

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RESOURCE #1: STUDY GUIDE

If your LifeGroup does meet over the Christmas holiday (or if you find yourself in the company of Christians and want to meditate on Jesus' joy together), here's a quick study guide to help you facilitate discussion.

Primary Passages: Isaiah 12:1-6 and John 16:20-22

*O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heavenly home
Make safe the way that leads on high
And close the path to misery
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, o Israel*

“The joy Jesus was bringing into the world was like no other kind in history... It is the very joy that Jesus himself has in God the Father— which he has had from all eternity and will have forever... He promises to put that in us. That is what the Holy Spirit does... This is ‘great joy.’ And it cannot be taken away. It is indestructible.”

- John Piper

Read the Scriptures and reading in the **wk. 4 Devotional - The Birth of Joy** together as a group. (pg. 46)

- How would you describe the state of your joy right now?
- Are you fighting for joy to dictate how you perceive your circumstances, or are you letting your circumstances dictate how you perceive your joy? Why is that?

Read John 16:20-22. Jesus makes two promises:

#1: Someday our joy will be so great that we won't remember all the pain and agony of this life.

#2: No one will ever take away the joy that He gives to us.

- How are these promises encouraging to you right now? What makes these promises hard to believe right now?
- What are practical ways we can repent and fight for gospel joy in the midst of whatever circumstances we find ourselves in?

Pray for our LG and church to see our pain in this life as birth pangs that will someday give way to a greater joy than we can imagine.

Pray for us to rest in the joy of Jesus' salvation and offer that joy to those around us no matter what our circumstances are.

UPCOMING BLOG RESOURCES:

The following blog resources will be published the week of 12/11 to 12/17. To find them watch for activity on our blog at: www.midtowncolumbia.com/blog or come back here as we will publish them here as they are finished!

- **Painful/Awkward Family Relationships** - While many people will be enjoying the best family time of the year, we know that many will experience hard, broken family situations. Both sin and death rip apart the joy that we want to experience during the holidays. So we will be publishing some resources and scriptures to help you fight for joy in the midst of your family pain.
- **Infusing Gospel Elements in a LG Christmas Party** - One of our church planting candidates, Jake Blair, takes a look at some helpful suggestions on how you can infuse your LG Christmas party with singing, reading and general gospel merry-making.
- **CHRISTmas Experience** - Midtown's very own editor and blog curator, Courtney Gibson, is something of an Advent enthusiast. For over a decade she's been curating a playlist of theologically accurate, gospel-centered music that takes you on a roughly-chronological and smoothly-harmonious journey through the events preceding and surrounding Jesus' birth.